



The Iguana



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Photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn

A rescue intervention crew from the Soto Cano Fire Department backs up the primary fire entry team at the AF-FOR day room, which was the scene of a fire Sept. 26. Tech Sgt. Troy Wright, fire prevention, said the suspected cause of the fire is unattended cooking. The fire prevention office would like to remind all members of JTF-Bravo not to leave any cooking unattended. Fire prevention week runs Oct. 7 - 13, see fire department story, page 8.

JTF-B moves to UEM; saves \$600,000

By 1st Lt. Richard Komurek
Public Affairs

Temporary duty servicemembers will soon notice a change in their per diem rates as Joint Task Force-Bravo implements Essential Unit Messing (UEM) program in response to a \$1 million reduction in funds for the new fiscal year.

UEM will allow JTF-Bravo to pay TDY members partial per diem for incidentals while providing meals to them at no cost to the task force. The change will ultimately save JTF-Bravo \$600,000 per year and free up money that can be used for base-wide quality-of-life programs.

Starting Nov. 1, per diem for TDY members at Soto Cano will change from \$11.50 per day to \$3.50 per day. The \$8 difference is the amount specifically designated for the basic food allowance of three meals per day at the dining facility. So why the change?

The issue of fiscal responsibility was key to the decision to reduce per diem and provide meals at no cost to servicemembers. Faced with a significant fi-

nancial shortfall, base leaders scrutinized the task force budget for weeks looking for ways to redistribute spending to ensure that projected increases in daily operating costs (power plant fuel as an example) can be absorbed with little impact on overall quality of life for members of the task force.

"The end of the fiscal year is the natural opportunity to review the finances of the joint task force," said Col. Mike Okita, JTF-Bravo commander. "It's my job to ensure effective and efficient use of money to maintain readiness, protect our airmen, soldiers, and civilians and modernize the task force for the years ahead."

Many categories of spending were reviewed, including dining facility management, the furniture replacement process, barracks refurbishment, and MWR programs, to name a few. However, it was strikingly apparent that when it came to feeding JTF-Bravo, the task force was not being business savvy and was missing out on an opportunity to use money accessible through the Army food service account system.

"We can make what money we have go further by taking advantage of an Army food service account. This food service account provides money to dining facilities worldwide," said Okita.

"The change in funding does not disadvantage TDY servicemembers because they will receive meals at no cost, which are equal to the TDY reimbursement for meals. We benefit by redirecting money previously allocated for a small percentage of JTF members to programs that service the entire task force."

There was also an issue of fairness involved in the decision to switch to UEM.

In light of budget pressures, commanders found they could not justify paying TDY personnel more money for food than their PCS counterpart when everyone gets Basic Allowance for Subsistence and has access to the same eating facilities.

Okita said, "spending \$600,000 a year extra for one-third of the task force that is in a TDY status is simply not equitable nor justifiable."

See TDY, Page 3

Commanders Corner

America's new war. How to respond to the media

By 1st Lt. Richard Komurek
Public Affairs

America is at war. In the days, weeks and months ahead the media will focus the eyes of the world upon our nation's military and our fight against terrorism. This war is unlike any other our nation has ever seen: The enemy is no single nation or government and the battlefield is global, including our own backyard. Regardless of our branch of service or duty location, none of us will remain untouched and our lives and careers will forever be changed by events that are about to unfold around the world. All of us will have a role in this new war and all of us also have the potential for being in the spotlight of international news media.

Just like our military, the media has global reach. Reporters with satellite dishes are already deployed around the world, waiting for our forces to make their move and ready to follow the action wherever it may go. The battlefield could be anywhere at any time, including Honduras. What will you do if the media approaches you? What will you say?

The following are 10 tips for doing media interviews:

- Use the media opportunity to tell your unit, Army or Air Force story, but remember that you don't have to talk to the media if you don't want to.
- Discuss only matters of which you have direct knowledge and if you don't know say "I don't know".
- Do not discuss political or foreign policy matters.
- Protect sensitive information and do not discuss operational capabilities, exact numbers of troops, numbers or types of casualties, types of weapons systems or future plans. Generalize by using terms such as approximate, light, moderate or heavy.

- If you accidentally say something classified, tell the reporter and ask him/her not to use it. Do not confiscate material or equipment from the media and report the incident to your chain of command immediately.

- Do not speculate and never lie to the media.
- Remember that everything you say is "on the record" and can be attributed to you.
- Take your time to think—questions need not be answered instantly.
- Be brief, concise, use simple language and avoid acronyms. Answer only one question at a time.
- Be polite but firm in dealing with the press.

Not sure what to say about the recent terrorist events or the military's role in fighting terrorism? Remember to stay in your lane and talk about what you do and what you know.

Key messages for JTF-Bravo members are:

- Joint Task Force-Bravo, along with all other U.S. forces around the world, is on an increased state of alert. Force protection is our top priority and we will do everything possible to ensure the safety of our personnel.
- Democracy and freedom have been attacked and all democracies must pull together to fight terrorism.
- The United States has the political resolve and military capability to defeat terrorists wherever they may hide and however long it may take. The United States seeks to destroy terrorists through coalition efforts.
- The United States remains committed to supporting democracy and its friends throughout Central and South America.

As members of the United States military in a foreign country, we are all ambassadors for our nation. Each of us is also a spokesperson for our branch of service, regardless of rank, duty title or career field.



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Chaplain's Corner

God should be known in the soul not in the imagination

By Chaplain (Capt.) Earl Vanderhoff
JTF-Bravo Chaplain

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

The foundation of all true knowledge of God must be a clear mental apprehension of His perfections as revealed in Holy Scripture. An unknown God can neither be trusted, served, nor worshipped. We need something more than a theoretical knowledge of God. God is only known in the soul as we yield ourselves to Him, submit to His authority, and regulate all the details of our lives by His precepts and commandments. The vast majority of people in the world today are virtually ignorant as to what the God of the Bible is like. They have heard of God, but much of what they have heard is distorted, one-sided, or altogether inaccurate. Most today have created a "god" to their own liking who exists only in their imaginations. Just think of the thousands of hours we spend studying for a college degree. Or the countless hours we spend learning to function in our MOS's. It seems very strange that so few will take time to try to know God better to prepare themselves for the world to come. It is hazardous not to spend time examining the God who is revealed to us in the Bible, for the Bible tells us that He is the

judge of all the earth and has ultimate power over every individual's eternal destiny.

The God of the Bible claims to be the one and only true God. He is revealed to us as being Creator of all that is, powerful, majestic, sovereign over all creation, loving, compassionate, patient, perfectly righteous, just, holy, and a God who is full of wrath or anger against all unrighteousness. These are only a few of the characteristics of the God of the Bible.

God is our creator as we read in GEN. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ...

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Since God made us, we are accountable to Him and

responsible to obey His will and submit to His authority. God desires that we lovingly choose to submit to Him; however, most people despise and hate the idea of the sovereignty of God as Psalm 135 declares, 5 For I know that the LORD is great, And our Lord is above all gods.

6 Whatever the LORD pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.

The Apostle Paul reveals to us what God is like in 1 Tim 6 we read...:

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

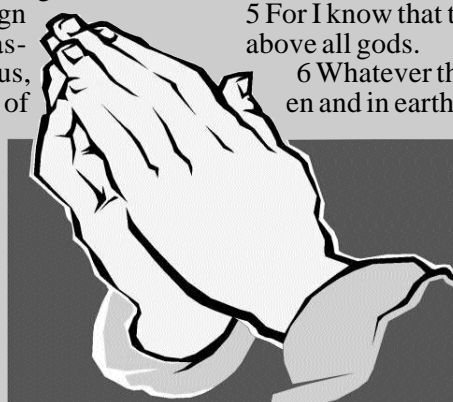
13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things,

and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

15 which He will manifest in His own time, He

See Chaplain, Page 3



Army not yet invoking 'stop-loss'

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Sept. 28, 2001) — The Army has not decided to enact "stop-loss" authority to keep soldiers from leaving active duty, despite some rumors or reports to the contrary.

"We do not have a stop-loss requirement at this time," said Reginald J. Brown, assistant secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

"There are all these rumors out there about stop-loss," Brown said. "As of this point in time, we don't see a need for it."

On Sept. 19, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld delegated stop-loss authority to the heads of the military departments.

To date, the Air Force announced a stop-loss policy that will last one month beginning Oct. 2. The continuation of the policy will be determined at the end of the month, officials said.

The Navy has announced it will begin a limited program Oct. 10 affecting about 10,500 sailors in certain specialties.

The Marine Corps has stated it will announce its program in the near future.

"We're studying it," Brown said about stop-loss. "It's under review."

Right now, however, Brown said the Army is at full strength and calling in the National Guard and Army Reserve for special needs has avoided the requirement for stop loss.

"We've been able to manage," Brown said.

"If we had a major mobilization, that might change things," he added.

If the Army opted to implement stop-loss, officials said troops would be informed through command channels and internal information sources first, and through the news media later.

Stop-loss allows the defense secretary, through a presidential executive order, to involuntarily extend service members on active duty. This means that service members cannot retire or leave after serving their obligatory time of enlistment.

Exceptions to the stop-loss policy allow the involuntary discharge of soldiers for criminal acts, under the Uniform of Code of Military Justice, or for medical reasons.

Stop-loss was last invoked by the Army during the Gulf War.

By Gary Sheftick and Master Sgt. Jon Cannon (ARNEWS)

Chaplain

(Continued from Page 2)

who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

Do you live in submission to God? Do you love Him and seek to do His will? If you would like to continue to study about what the Bible teaches about God call Chaplain Vanderhoff at 4351.

Come and join us for the "Spiritual Fitness Duty Day" 21 Sept. Sign up to participate and get a free "T-shirt".

Know that God has shown His love for lost sinners. As Jn. 3:16 explains.

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Tighter security due to recent events is reason for new mail procedures

By Tech Sgt. Scott Evans
Post Office

We, at the post office, greatly appreciate your patience and understanding concerning the inconstancy of incoming mail. We are still awaiting word as to when the mail will return to normal, or if current operations will be the new "normal" due to recent circumstances. Every morning (Monday - Saturday) at 7 a.m., outgoing mail is sent from Soto Cano to our mail carriers at the San Pedro Sula Airport. Incoming mail delivery has been very sporadic recently. It is normally delivered Monday through Saturday and arrives on base between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. Please remember it takes a while for us to distribute the mail.

Due to the security and current threat conditions, the Postal Service Center lobby will remain closed during non-duty hours. When the threat conditions al-

low, this security measure will be lifted.

Postal Privileges:

Identification cards must be presented at all times for all transactions conducted at the post office. If you are going to conduct business at the post office bring your I.D., no exceptions! This is not a change; it is enforcement of current regulation.

Along those same lines, the use of a post office box is a privilege not a right. In-coming mail is only for the individual assigned to that receptacle. It is unlawful to receive mail that is

not intended for you. Personnel should check their PO box on a regular basis. Personnel are not authorized to mail items for others. When sending mail,

your return address must be clearly shown on all letters and packages. If it is discovered that you are abusing your privileges, steps will be taken to determine whether or not you keep those privileges.

If you are going to be TDY or on leave for more than two weeks notify the post office and we will annotate the dates on your box. If a periodic review finds mail

postmarked more than two weeks old, the mail could be stamped "UNCLAIMED" and returned to sender.

Inbound Personnel:

Make it easy on your inbound troop by securing an advanced PO box assignment, within 30 days of their arrival. All you have to do is bring a copy of their PCS or TDY orders to the post office. Do not give them the official mail address to use; personnel are not authorized to receive personal mail through official mail channels.

Freebies:

Yes, we still have free magazines. If you are interested in checking out our undeliverable magazines just ask any postal worker at the Post Office.

If you have any questions about postal operations, or would like to be a Postal Volunteer, please contact Tech. Sgt. Scott Evans at ext. 4195, or stop by the post office.



TDY

(Continued from Page 1)

How ever, the commander noted that TDY troops will continue to receive money each day for incidentals like toothpaste, soap and other personal care items.

"Under the adjusted per diem rate, TDY personnel will still get about \$105 a month more than PCS personnel," Okita said.

The decision to change the per diem rate and designate JTF-Bravo as an Essential Unit Messing TDY was made in accordance with Joint Federal Travel Regulation, which states that the JTF commander determines the appropriate TDY entitlements for the task force.

The joint regulation requires that TDY service-

members be provided government quarters and messing, both of which are provided for under UEM.

Aware that some troops may have used per diem money for food to pay for other TDY expenses, base leaders carefully researched TDY regulations with finance personnel to ensure that troops would not lose any benefits and that procedures are in place to reimburse personnel for costs incurred by temporary duty, such as storage of household goods or vehicles.

The research found that just as with a PCS, TDY members are eligible for reimbursement for certain storage expenses if stated in their orders, according to 1st Lt. Wesley Erving, JTF-Bravo finance officer.

The request for reimbursement should be made at the end of their deployment when servicemembers submit their final travel voucher, he said.

Overall, the move to meal cards is a strategic financial maneuver that provides TDY members benefits without reducing quality of life programs enjoyed by all members of the joint task force.

Benefits paid to JTF-Bravo members each month

•Basic allowance for subsistence: \$160 to \$260 (based upon rank)

•SAFE pay (hardship duty)- \$100

•Family Separation Allowance (married or with dependents)- \$100

•Partial per diem (TDY members)- about \$105

Drugs in the military: Many services, same problem

Stories from inside the military's effort to catch abusers within ranks

Operation Goldenflow attacks where the evidence lives

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
Public Affairs

Beads of sweat collected and rolled down my face like a torrential flood. My fingers were wrapped tightly around the cylindrical canister to which I was numb-fingered and feared carpal tunnel would set in. Leaning forward, I stare unenthusiastically at the patch-worked quilt of a cement-blocked wall, tracing the cracks, imperfections and splotted paint with an imaginary focus hoping to end the pain that had welled up in my abdomen for the past hour. My only thought that kept coming to mind time and again was how could I have subjected myself to this form of torture? The answer was clear, and it started with signing the dotted line 16 years ago and culminated by a phone call that called me to duty less than an hour before.

While we are all subject to this duty, some are tasked more frequently than others. For many servicemembers it is nothing more than an irritation in the day's schedule. For some people, like me, it is an affair that lasts several hours and we dislike the process entirely even though we understand and accept its mission whole-heartedly. For those who have participated in Operation Goldenflow, it is a mission unto itself and is deserving of understanding.

Getting a call from Air Force Master Sgt. Enrique Caraballo a mere hour before was a surprise. He had never called me, and being a new kid on the block, I thought it might be a cheerful invite for lunch — but rather the master sergeant spoke the rather the words that I have grown to loath over my career, "You have been randomly selected for drug-urinalysis testing. Report to the family support center with your I.D. card for testing."

After resuscitating my heart's functions, I calmly said, "you have to be kidding me, right?" As to which he calmly said, and I thought I heard him laugh, "no."

The ritual of forcing fluids is a habit some career field members endure for "super hydrating" in preparation for a long day in a warm or physically demanding environment. My ritual is a matter of mere duty performance, as the Lord blessed me with an inability

to process by the numbers upon demand. After dozens of these military operations under my career's belt, a half-gallon of water in 60 minutes is the correct amount of preparation needed. No longer is it a petrifying event in my life that consumes a half day, but rather it is a new challenge in an attempt to shave off precious minutes of abdominal pain from a previous record-setting performance.

Reporting to the sign-in point, giving up the I.D. card and being briefed on the procedures doesn't change from installation to installation — only the sense of humor of those in the testing area is the main variable. Folks tasked as observers for the process should be given an achievement medal after every five sorties — this detail isn't for the weak of heart and is arguably the worst detail on base. Known by many unprintable names, being an observer has no redeeming values on a performance report, and I have never seen a letter of appreciation on any airman's wall commemorating this act of service before self.

For who do we all owe this debt of gratitude too? We owe it to the many soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who are caught each year through the drug testing process for using illegal drugs, unauthorized prescription medicines and

steroids.

My father said many times, "If there wasn't any crime we wouldn't have a need for police and locks on our house doors." But because of drug use in the military we have the random urinalysis program.

On Soto Cano we have a unique situation. The Army and the Air Force each have a separate testing system that operates on the same principals with the same goals. They act as a deterrent against illegal substance abuse, and in the absence of a deterrent, they catch the folks who break the law.

How many folks each year are caught with this method? According to the Air Force Surgeon General Office, 954 Air Force members were identified in the 2000. This is nearly five times the amount of Air Force members stationed at Soto Cano. That equivocates to a 0.39 percent catch rate. Of the members here at Soto Cano, one person will be caught each year for using illegal substances — statistically speaking.

tistically speaking.

Basic Military Training students fared worse as 493 young airmen were identified for illegal substance use.

The top three substances testing positive in active-duty Air Force members are marijuana, cocaine and methamphetamines.

The penalties for use are stiff. For it to be effective, the Air Force has adopted a zero-tolerance policy on drug use. If you are caught, you are gone. Whether punitive action comes with it is a decision left up to the local authorities, but suffice to say the Air Force sends out numerous press releases of jail time for offenders of the policy. See sidebar for additional stories.

While many civilian companies use other less invasive forms of drug testing, the Luke Air Force Base Law Office Manager Master Sgt. Jeff Dixon summed it up most efficiently. The military's record of conviction is above reproach with the current system.

"There is a higher percentage of 'catches' with the random, unannounced inspections. Due to past courts-martial cases, appellate reviews, and local inspections, the chain of custody procedures are nearly flawless. That's why you see the same collection procedures being used at each Air Force base. The Air Force uses state-of-the-art testing procedures. Two separate tests measure positive test results. If a sample is found to be 'clean' during the initial test, the sample is disposed of and that is that! However, positive tests are tested a second time using a more sophisticated testing method. This approach allows for a much higher number of tests to be performed for fewer dollars, a higher conviction rate, and more credibility to the overall drug-testing program," Dixon said.

So with 16 years of service, I have grown to accept Operation Goldenflow as a mission readiness enhancer with as much importance as any humanitarian or support mission I have participated in.

However, when the call comes in on the telephone, I know that my heart will still sink an inch, I will still utter a groan when I am called to perform, and I'll have to reschedule my appointments to accommodate the new mission. Until then I'll just keep my water cooler full and a couple of cans of soda in the fridge just in case I am called to mobilize into action on a moments notice.

Curiosity earns airman eight months in brig

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. (AFPN) — An airman's foray into drugs and the local club scene here earned her eight months of confinement time at a military detention facility in California, a bad conduct discharge, reduction to airman basic and total forfeitures of pay and allowances.

The 20-year-old airman, who agreed to be interviewed on condition of anonymity, shared her story so that others can learn from her mistakes.

Because she thought the drugs would be out of her system in three days, and because it was a weekend, and she believed there was only a slim chance of having a drug test on Monday, she said she took cocaine, methamphetamine and ecstasy.

"I knew it was illegal, but I was curious. I had heard how meth makes you feel good, so I was like 'Wow, I want to try it.' It was just a party thing," she said. "I figured, 'Hey, I'm off base, at a club. I don't see any military people here. I'm not going to get caught.'"

What the airman did not know was that, while she was club hopping, getting high and helping her friends get Ecstasy pills during a "girls' night out," she was observed distributing the drug.

After purchasing Ecstasy for two friends, she never stop to think, "I'm distributing Ecstasy." Two days later, the pills she purchased ended up in an evidence box at the Office of Special Investigation.

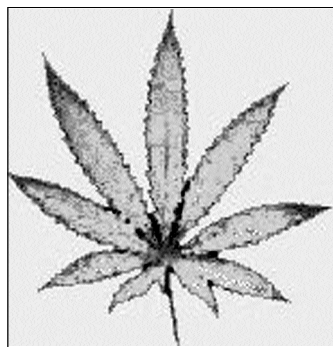
On March 15 her commander read her the charges, one count each for use of cocaine, methamphetamine and Ecstasy and two counts of distribution of Ecstasy.

After sentencing the airman was immediately taken into custody and escorted to the holding facility here. Two days after sentencing, the airman was sent to the Naval Consolidated Brig Miramar, a medium security confinement facility in San Diego, Calif.

One thing she is certain of is that she does not want anyone else to make the same mistake she did.

"Don't do it," she said. "Drugs may make you feel great for a while, but it's not worth it. If you get caught, you suffer the consequences."

By Karen Fleming-Michael
Air University Public Affairs



War on drugs: Army launching campaign against Ecstasy

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Aug. 7, 2001) — Army leaders plan to combat the increasing soldier use of the “club drug” Ecstasy with education, hard cold facts and aggressive random drug testing, said Dr. George Chagalis, director of the Army Center for Substance Abuse Programs.

The center will release a computer slide briefing, complete with “Techno” music, later this month for commanders to train their units on the potential dangers of Ecstasy.

“This drug directly affects the combat readiness of the Army — that’s why we are serious about getting the word out on it,” Chagalis said. “Young people today have a feeling of invincibility. They say, ‘It won’t happen to me,’ but the fact is that it does happen to young people.”

One myth the briefing should dispel is that Ecstasy clears the system and cannot be detected after 24 hours of use. The fact is it can be detected up to 72 hours after use and its side effects of depression, mood swings and erratic behavior last even longer, said Edwin Fisher, chief of ACSAP’s prevention and training branch.

While there is still a lot of research to be done on Ecstasy, scientists do know that it affects the brain by drawing out large amounts of the naturally occurring chemical serotonin. This chemical causes feelings of

euphoria and a sense of well-being. However, Ecstasy can cause short-term or even permanent depletion of the brain’s serotonin reservoir.

“Without serotonin, you no longer have joy in your life,” Chagalis said. “Can you imagine a life without a natural sense of joy in it? You would have to medicated for the rest of your life just for a sense of normalcy.”

And like most drugs, you can become addicted to Ecstasy or die of an overdose — even from a single use, Fisher said.

While the potential adverse effects of Ecstasy are bad enough, Fisher said, throw in the fact most Ecstasy sold on the street is not the real thing, but a mix of other amphetamines and drugs.

The sterility of the lab that made the drug is an unknown, he said, and, if Ecstasy is present, you don’t know its potency nor what drug or substance it has been cut with.

One common Ecstasy filler is a drug known as PMA. It directly impacts the hormones that regulate body temperature. In a cool environment, users can suffer hypothermia, an abnormal cooling of the body core temperature. In closed, crowded environments like those found at most Rave parties, the effects can be a body temperature of 104 degrees or more and severe dehydration.

“This drug’s effect on the body is like a car engine overheating and blowing the radiator,” Fisher said. “There are cases where people have died using Ecstasy laced with PMA and their bodies still had a temperature of 107 degrees hours later.”

ACSAP statistics showed 39 soldiers came up hot for Ecstasy out of 631,918 urinalysis tests conducted in 1998. Positive tests jumped to 153 out of 627,888 in 1999 and 471 out of 679,640 in 2000. Through the end of June, with one more quarter to go in the fiscal year, more than 620 troops have already been identified through urinalysis tests as having used Ecstasy.

All urinalysis samples sent to Department of Defense labs are tested for THC, cocaine, amphetamines and at least one other drug. The additional tests may be for barbiturates, opiates, PCP or LSD. Ecstasy is an amphetamine.

“We still have a lot to learn about Ecstasy, but brain scans have shown that it alters the basic structure of the brain,” Fisher said. “Young people are pretty resilient. Some might be able to take a few times without feeling any visible lasting effects — but it will catch up with them.”

For more information on Ecstasy and other club drugs, visit the ACSAP website, www.acsap.org.

By Joe Burlas (ARNEWS)

Bragg MPs to face drug charges

FORT BRAGG, N.C.- (Army News Service, July 10, 2001) — Several soldiers from the 16th Military Police Brigade have been punished for illegal drug use following a two-month investigation by the Fort Bragg Office of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command.

Three other soldiers face possible court-martial and an official from Fort Bragg said the names of the soldiers would not be released until formal charges are filed.

A recommendation has been made for one soldier, a specialist, to be tried by general court-martial. He will face charges on three counts of distribution of a drug known as ecstasy, one count of using ecstasy, and one count of communicating a threat. That soldier’s Article 32 hearing will be held in mid-July.

Another specialist is scheduled to be tried by a special court-martial. A special court-martial is limited to punishments of up to six months confine-

ment and forfeiture of pay. That soldier will face charges on one count of using LSD, one count of distribution of ecstasy, and one count of using ecstasy. He will be arraigned next week.

Three other soldiers who were facing less serious charges received field grade Article 15s, two were reduced in grade as a result. Another soldier, a sergeant, declined a field grade Article 15 and has requested a court-martial. No decision has been made in that case.

Four soldiers received written reprimands.

A sergeant was retained past his term of service date

with pay and benefits to allow completion of the investigation. He was not charged and was honorably discharged from the Army.

Charges were dropped against another soldier after the investigation revealed he was not in possession of a controlled substance.

(Editor’s note: This article was provided by the XVIII Airborne Corps Public Affairs Office.)



Buyers beware: steroids, hemp seed products off limits to Air Force members

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. (AFPN) — Exercising and following good eating habits can lead to a long and healthy life, but taking health products with hemp seeds or using steroids can lead to a short Air Force career.

There are some nutritional supplements on the commercial market that are made with hemp byproducts such as hemp seeds and hemp seed oil. Although the use, importation or manufacturing of marijuana is illegal in the United States, hemp byproducts are not themselves illegal. To attract customers, manufacturers of hemp seed oil products market hemp byproducts as good sources of fatty acids and proteins. However, taking these products could spell the end of the line for airmen.

Even though hemp seeds do not themselves contain tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, the seeds may become contaminated with THC through contact with the stems and leaves during processing.

Laboratory testing can’t distinguish between hemp seed oil products and marijuana.

Therefore, to ensure military readiness, the ingestion of hemp seed oil or products made with hemp seed

oil is now prohibited by Air Force Instruction 44-121. Failure to comply with this prohibition is a violation of Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

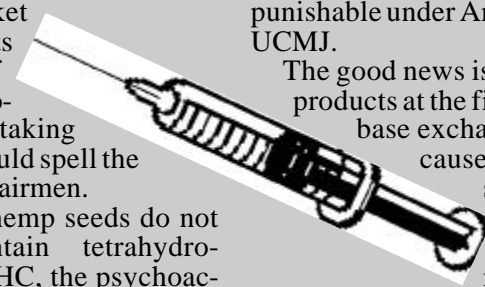
Ignorance is no excuse. When a urinalysis test detects the presence of prohibited substances in an airman’s system, in whatever form, UCMJ action is likely to follow.

The use of steroids is a different story. Air Force members should be aware that steroids are a Schedule III controlled substance. They are illegal to use unless prescribed by a licensed physician. Wrongful use of steroids is punishable under Article 112a of the UCMJ.

The good news is that nutritional products at the fitness center and base exchange are safe because they do not stock any products containing the prohibited substances.

The best course of action is to always consult with a physician before using dietary supplements, or beginning any diet or exercise program. So, buyer beware. Be smart, be aware, read the label and get professional advice.

by Capt. Sean McKenna
Air Force Space Command Public Affairs



MWR trip offers experience into another world

By Spc. Sarah Maxwell
Public Affairs

Servicemembers who are stationed at Soto Cano undoubtedly have a wide variety of activities they can do in the area. With good restaurants, an abundance of nightlife and very welcoming locals, there are definitely things to keep us entertained. But, when that Mariachi band is blaring loud music next to your face while you're eating, and you're starting to memorize the play list at the local discotechs, Joint Task Force-Bravo's Morale, Welfare and Recreation program has just the way to escape.

You can become part of an exotic environment with the ease of weightlessness and the ability to effortlessly glide through the water while watching beautifully colored fish and coral.

It's a scene most people only view through the glass of an aquarium.

Everyone who is here, whether they're on temporary duty or permanently stationed, has the opportunity to take a glimpse into this other world through the MWR-sponsored scuba diving certification program.

Servicemembers can use up to \$100 of their MWR funds to put toward the \$175 open-water basic scuba certification course through one of the top dive centers in Honduras, The Bay Islands College of Diving in Utila.

The college also helps out the servicemembers by splitting up what is usually a five-day class into two weekends by doing the first part of the class here on base. Servicemembers must go to the small Honduran island, Utila, which is surrounded by the second largest reef in the world, to finish their certification process with four open-water dives.

According to Robin Gonzalez, MWR manager,

about 125 servicemembers have taken advantage of the program since January.

She also said the feedback she's received from people on the trips has been really good.

Having got his certification in July, Warrant Officer Phillip Kelleher, 1st Battalion, 1-228th Aviation Regiment, used the easy access to scuba diving down here to make his one-year tour more fun.

"I didn't know what to expect, but it has a lot more to offer than I ever thought possible," he said. "The best part was that it is a totally different world that not everyone gets to see, and every time you go you will have a totally different experience."

Others who have gotten their certification here not only find it fun, but they also use it to relax.

"I was in awe of the underwater world. It was very relaxing and made me forget about any problems or stress I had accumulated while at Soto Cano," said Air Force

Sgt. Ben Brown, AFFOR.

He got his basic certification in August while his friend went through the advanced open-water course.

"Regardless, if you never plan on diving again, do it here! You have an excellent opportunity to learn to dive, for next to nothing. Once certified, you have one of the finest places on Earth to dive — the scenery is beautiful," he said.

When servicemembers get their certification, they're not just getting a chance to learn



Photos by SPC Sarah Maxwell

At nearly 60 feet down in the Caribbean Sea's warm water, Warrant Officer Phillip Kelleher, 1-228th, hovers over a brilliant coral reef soon after receiving his basic scuba certification in Utila.

great atmosphere for kicking back and relaxing with good food and really good prices. I

think everyone should be encouraged to get there," said Kelleher.

Gonzalez said MWR tries to make it as easy as possible for servicemembers to get this unique experience while down here. They do it by offering a four-day trip every weekend. Flights are \$123 round-trip from Tegucigalpa. Lodging prices vary.

If you're already an open-water scuba diver, you can use your MWR money to go toward an advanced open-water or rescue diver certification.

"It's to make one of the best tours affordable," said Gonzalez. "Take advantage of it. You can't afford not to." For more information contact MWR travel and tours at ext. 4268 or stop by the recreation center office.



A diver can see a wide array of different coral while diving on the reef in Utila.



A colorful parrot fish munches on coral with its hard, beak-like mouth.

The reef surrounding Utila has an abundance of tropical fish to watch.

Items to consider before taking birds back to the United States

By Sgt. James Barclay
Preventive Medicine

Preventive Medicine has been getting a lot of inquiries about exporting parrots to the United States. There are a few items that must be considered before getting a bird to take back with you.

- All parrots and many other birds require a Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species export permit from their country of origin prior to their entry into the United States.

- All birds must have a health certificate issued by a full-time, salaried veterinary officer of the national government from which the bird is to be exported from.

- An export permit is also required from the country that the bird is coming out of. Once this is done an importation permit from the U.S. Department of Agriculture is required before the bird may be brought into the United States.

Another item that will be needed is the birds scientific name (genus and species) along with the common name. The USDA will assist you in matters relating to the quarantine; however, they are not responsible for determining if your bird is federally protected. This is your responsibility.

Once all the permits are approved, arrangements will have to be made to ship your bird to one of the USDA's Pet Bird Quarantine Stations for a period of 30

days. The regulations require that full payment be made with your application to cover estimated quarantine related costs for the required quarantine period; this doesn't include any additional costs from the broker's fees.

The birds will be shipped to the appropriate quarantine station. During this quarantine period, the bird will be medicated for psittacosis every day during its stay. If after the 30 days the bird is still positive for psittacosis, the treatment will continue until the bird is negative. While in quarantine the bird will also be tested for Exotic Newcastle Disease. After quarantine the bird will be picked up from the broker by you or shipped to you. Again you are responsible for the cost of transportation. There are six different USDA quarantine locations for birds these are located in New York, Miami, San Ysidro, Calif, Hidalgo, Texas, Los Angeles and Honolulu.

Psittacine birds carry a disease called psittacosis (parrot fever) which is transmissible to people. This is an acute infectious disease which can be serious if left untreated. Common symptoms include fever, headache, muscular pain, chills, and upper and lower respiratory tract infections.

Individuals that develop these symptoms after exposure to psittacine birds should contact their health care provider. Psittacosis in people is generally easily managed and treated. Psittacosis in birds may exist for a long periods of time without any outward signs. However, infected birds can transmit the disease to people or other birds even when they appear healthy.

Psittacine birds include, but not limited to, birds commonly known as, African grays, Amazons, beebees, budgies, cockatiels, cockatoos, lories, lorikeets, lovebirds, macaws, parakeets, parrots, and parrotlets.

Veterinary services has more information about importing pet birds into the United States. Veterinary services also has a copy of the CITES (dated September 30, 1992 reprinted in March 1994) which lists the animals covered by that convention, and the pamphlet Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (Aug. 20, 1994). Contact Sgt. James Barclay at ext. 4198 for more information or questions.

- Soto Cano doesn't have a licensed veterinarian stationed here so health certificates, in English, would have to be obtained on the economy. And pets would have to be shipped out of the Tegucigalpa airport.



JTF-Bravo team ready for 'fast pace' scenic tour of Washington

By 1st Lt. Anne Hartmann
MEDEL

Joint Task Force-Bravo's Army 10-Miler Team has been working out for the past two months preparing for the 10 mile race in Washington, D.C. The team training has consisted of the perimeter run on Mondays (about six miles), a slower pace 4-mile run on Tuesdays, a hill workout on Wednesdays, a pool workout on Thursdays, and a 10-12 mile run on Fridays.

The Army 10-Miler is famous for its esprit de corps and competition. Former JTF-Bravo Command Sgt. Maj. Herman Fisher spearheaded organizing this team, while Master Sgt. Jonny Stone has taken on the role of team captain.

"With the support from the sections of our runners we were able to maintain a challenging program. I feel confident that our team will do well representing JTF-Bravo," Stone said.

The "Champion Chip" timing system will be used to time the race. The timing system records both your "gun time" and your "chip time."

You must attach the timing chip to your shoe and cross the rubberized mats at the start, on the course, and at the finish.

Overall awards will be determined by

"gun time." Age group awards and team awards will be determined by "chip time." The course provides a scenic tour of our nation's capital.

Runners travel through national park land, along the Potomac River and past such national treasures as the Capitol, the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, and the Washington Monument.

The Army also sets up tents called HOOAH tents where teams can congregate after the race and start the post-race festivities.

"... our team will do well representing JTF-Bravo."

Master Sgt. Jonny Stone Team Captain

"With my past experience running races, this is a very fast pace race, but one of the best courses. It is also very competitive among the units. It definitely will be a challenge for me

this year because I am competing against my own post and they are a very competitive team," said Sgt. 1st Class Cindy Trofimuk, who has run the race twice before.

Congratulations to the following 10 members of the JTF-Bravo's Army 10-Miler Team: Maj. Kenneth Downer, Air Force Capt. Celiann Gonzalez, Capt. Pamela Alexander, 1st Lt. Regan Allen, 1st Lt. Anne Hartmann, Warrant Officer Kevin Palmer, Master Sgt. Jonny Stone, Sgt. 1st Class Jose Lachuga, Sgt. 1st Class Cindy Trofimuk, and Private 1st Class Nenad Sebez.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn

Song and dance show...

Members of the band Liquid Blue, perform at The Oasis during one of four shows they performed while here. The band members arrived Sept. 9 with a short stay planned, but ended staying until Sept. 18.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn

BRIEFS

New Finance Hours

Effective Oct. 1, the cashier hours are as follows:

- Mon, Tues, & Wed: 0830-1430
- Thursday: Closed
- Friday: 0830-1500

Customer service hours:

- Mon, Tue, Wed, & Fri: 0830-1600
- Closed for Lunch 1200-1300
- Thursday: Closed

Thrift Savings Plan

Military Thrift Savings Plan enrollments start Oct. 9

Beginning Oct. 9, active duty and Reserve component service members can choose to contribute a percentage of their pay to the military's thrift savings program (TSP). The American Forces Press Service reports that the TSP had previously been available only to federal civilian employees. The first enrollment window for persons who entered military service on or before Dec. 8, 2001, is from Oct. 9, 2001, to Jan. 31, 2002. Persons who enroll during this period will see TSP contributions deducted each month from their pay starting in January 2002. Persons who join the uniformed services after Dec. 8, 2001 will have 60 days after entering service to enroll in the TSP. Military members can enroll in TSP by completing a TSP election form and submitting it through their local service branch finance office. Servicemembers can download enrollment forms and obtain other information from the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov.

Meal rates for new fiscal year

MEAL	DISCOUNT	STANDARD
Breakfast	\$1.35	\$1.60
Lunch	\$2.70	\$3.25
Dinner	\$2.70	\$3.25
Holiday	\$4.40	\$5.30

(Thanksgiving and Christmas)

The BX/PX needs your help

This is an urgent plea for everyone's assistance. The BX/PX is out of change! That's right. They have no more coins to give. Please go through your hoochs, check the cushions in your sofa, gather any change you can find and bring it to the BX.

Fire department always ready for emergencies

By Tech Sgt. Troy Wright
Fire Department

Attention in the station: "We have a report of a fire in Building. 371. There are two personnel unaccounted for."

This is the moment that all firefighters around the world train for - the point in time when people's lives are at risk and property is being destroyed.

When this happens at Joint Task Force-Bravo, there are about 18 people ready to respond 24 hours a day and put their training to use. This group works a 48-hour shift. In essence, the firefighters spend half of their tour at the fire station. There are two operational shifts that work the alternating 48-hour schedules.

Besides the shift workers, there are others that support the fire protection mission. The communication center is the main 911-reception location. There are two Honduran nationals and two military firefighters working 24-hours a day that receive calls and dispatch resources. When the new fire alarm system goes into operation, the

computerized alarm receiver will be located in the communications center.

Preventing fires is the main goal of the fire prevention section. This two-person shop inspects all the JTF-Bravo facilities annually looking for fire and life safety discrepancies. These are then turned over to the facility manager for correction. The fire inspectors also provide newcomer's briefings, hands-on fire extinguisher training, and review plans for construction projects.

Training is the key to any successful operation, and the fire department is no exception. The assistant chief for training is responsible for all training conducted within the department. This includes reoccurring proficiency training, upgrade training and certification training. Training makes up the majority of the operational shift's duty day and can include everything from assigned and transient aircraft to confined space rescue.

The firefighters can be called upon to perform a wide range of operations. The day of just fighting structure or aircraft fires is long gone. Today's fire-

fighters are also trained to deal with hazardous chemical releases from various containers. This requires them to wear specialized suits that protect them from the liquid and vapor hazard.

Another hazardous tasking is confined-space rescue. This entails entering an area that has limited access and the possibility of a toxic atmosphere. These areas include below grade pits, above ground fuel tanks, and fixed wing fuel cells.

Another aspect that is prevalent in Honduras is brush firefighting. When the rain stops and the vegetation dries, brush fire season is under way. Again, this requires specialized clothing and equipment. The local fire departments are very limited on resources so they count on JTF-Bravo for support. There is a written agreement between the Comayagua Fire Department and the Soto Cano Fire Department that allows base resources to be used off base.

The Soto Cano firefighters have also deployed to other countries in support of military operations. In December of 1999, a fire truck and a crew of four were sent to Columbia.

MORALE, WELFARE AND RECREATION TRIVIA CONTEST

ENTRY RULES:

- Only active duty military are eligible to participate.
- Only one entry per person per contest.
- Completed entries may be given to the Morale Welfare and Recreation Manager, H- 401, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., or emailed to Robin R. Gonzalez.
- Entries must be received by Oct. 11.
- Completed entries will be verified for accuracy by an independent judging panel (PAO, MWR and one volunteer).
- If none of the entries are completed, then entries with the most correct answers will be judged.
- Decisions of the judges are final.
- Completed and correct entries will be maintained in the MWR safe until the Commander's Radio Talk Show.
- A disinterested individual will draw two correct entries and announce the winners.
- Prizes will be awarded the two winners and may be picked up at the MWR Manager's office.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS (answers may be found in the library):

Who is Al Gore: _____

Where is Truth or Consequences: _____

Where is the longest unguarded border in the world: _____

Where does Elian Gonzalez live: _____

When did man first walk on the moon: _____

What was Samuel Clemens's pen name: _____

Where is Tierra del Fuego: _____

Who lives in Windsor Castle: _____

Who won the first "Survivor" TV show: _____

Who is author J. k. Rowling's main character: _____

What color is Big Bird: _____

What movie did Kevin Spacey win an Oscar for: _____

Who is Colonel Okita: _____

What cartoon is Charles Schulz famous for: _____

Who is Luciano Pavarotti: _____

Where is Copan: _____

Who was/is Dick Tracy's girl friend: _____

What are the five military services: _____

NAME: _____ UNIT _____ DUTY PHONE _____

VERIFIED BY: _____ DATE: _____